

WASHINGTON, D. C.

For the National Era.

AMERICAN EDUCATION.

BY L. A. HINE.

Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Education, at its Third Session, in Cleveland, Ohio, from the 19th to the 22d of August, 1853.

I. PRELIMINARY. II. WHAT IS EDUCATION? III. REPUBLICAN SCHOLARSHIP—IV. COLLEGIATE EDUCATION—V. FEMALE EDUCATION—VI. THE AMERICAN SYSTEM.

I. PRELIMINARIES.

The Spirit of the Age! All hail! What is the spirit of the Age? Tell us, ye who mouth the praise to it. Is it commercial? Yes, verily. Is it Mormon worship? Undoubtedly. Is it invention? Behold the fire annihilator, the steam pressure engine, and Solomon's carbonic acid gas triumphant over steam; steamboats, locomotives, and telegraphs, are too old for mention here. It is the spirit of the Age, however, that has fallen, that the past half century has done more than several whole centuries put together had previously done.

But what is the Spirit of the Age? There is something underneath all this mightier than them all, which is embraced by the spirit of the present, the hopes for the future, and the elements of all human progress. Listen: It is the Educational Spirit that has so deeply seated itself in the hearts of all philanthropists, and in the minds of all who have fallen, that the past half century has done more than several whole centuries put together had previously done.

Such is the Spirit of the Age, and to all other spirits are auxiliary. Commerce lays her golden treasures at her altar, to be offered up in the name of human development. Mammoth schools are the temples of the future, and to the demands of the immortal mind; but she obeys. Invention brings her conquests of power to save the labor of the people, and give them time for study. Railroads are uniting the ocean with the mighty river, and the great lakes with the Southern Gulf, and the interminable of distant peoples stimulates the movement of mind. Telegraphs click to the touch of a thousand miles distant, and a great thought in Boston, Cincinnati, or New Orleans, leaps instantly through the ether, and is heard in the remotest of the globe. Conquest strikes her territories to free schools, and strikes down the iron gates that had interposed between the people and the temple of knowledge. Peace calls for schools, because the union of old world says, they are fools who fight. Reform lifts up her loudest shout for every advancement that is made in universal enlightenment. Such is the Spirit of the Age. It received its birth in that pregnant sentence of Locke's, that "of all mankind the fewest are wise, and the fewest are good, or bad, by their education." And it grew and grew, accelerated by the massive announcement of Burke, that "Education is the chief disease of nations"—which Chalmers declared to be one of the mightiest of those sentences or oracles that have ever fallen from any of the seers or sages of our land.

But the pilgrims are the fathers of the system of popular Democratic American Education. They opened the doors of the academy and the college to the whole people, and the progress of education in all nations is determined by the number of school-houses they contain. The Pilgrims were Bible men, holding it to be the first duty of all to read the Bible—in opposition to the Catholic, who believed that the Book should not be read by the vulgar; but *ecce*, confined to the indoctrinated. The Pilgrims repudiated this idea of sacred mysteries, entertained by Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras, and transmitted through the ages to modern times, and proclaimed that all men—in short, the Bible should be read universally. But Rome replied, that this could not be, for the people were unlettered, and could not decipher the *lex scripta*. True, rejoined the Pilgrims, we will give them the letter that argument by instituting schools in every neighborhood, and compelling the parents to send their children. It demanded a powerful motive to establish so vast, so beneficial an enterprise, and that motive was found in religious progress in hostility to Rome. But no matter; the Pilgrims prevailed, and the Catholic is now competing with him for the best common school.

Happy was the remark of Bishop Potter, the President of the Association, that the Convention had assembled in the name of Progress. We have come to proclaim the Association we have organized. We stand where, fifty years ago, no voice was heard. We are in a beautiful city of two million souls! * * *

We come to proclaim that the founders of this

association have been beating high with progress. But when we stand in the spirit, we stand also to vindicate our interests in the cause of conservation. While we are seeking unattainable good, we would not ignore the past nor part with one of the blessings it has transmitted. Happy, too, was his reference to contemporary education, and to the same day in other parts of the country and the world. "While in the great State of Ohio the Educational Association is in session, Science has assembled her votaries at the capital of the Empire State; and across the water nations are congregating to display the triumphs of Peace, and to lay more deeply the foundations of its perpetuity!" Verily, the world does move, and it is Education that makes it march. But—

2. WHAT IS EDUCATION?

Professor Bates, of Boston, took an early opportunity to inquire, What is Education? He said that discipline is the education of the mind. Let us see. What is discipline? It relates more especially to the training of the mental powers, enabling the individual to walk the line as marked by those who control his education. The soldier is disciplined, and Education thus applied to military evolutions is analogous to that mental discipline which is comprehended in the term discipline. Thus, according to Professor Bates, the student should be taught or trained to "be the better man."

He is to be trained to be the better man, morally and intellectually. His individuality as an independent thinker and a sovereign individual is to be merged in the formalism and faith of his teachers! No, no, no. This is not Education. It is perversion. He proceeded to say that man must be morally as well as physically educated—a very true saying, good enough, but not enough; but what else are aiming at, through physical education, is far the most neglected. Owing to this defect, our colleges turn out many moral imbeciles and intellectual dyspeptics. But continues Mr. Bates, the Education education also fits men only for the office of

brutes!—a misrepresentation, to say the least. It is not the body the tenement, and also the instrument of the mind? Is it not true that mental manifestations are as the body or instrument? Is it not, therefore, the first importance that the body should be truly educated? A full and harmonious mind cannot possibly be found in connection with a brutish body. It follows, then, that so far from making man brutes, a true physical education is absolutely essential to a true moral and intellectual development. They mutually act upon each other, and their education should be carried along harmoniously at one and the same time.

What is Education? President Mahan also asked the question, and, with some hesitation, gave the same answer.

"The true idea of Education, and the principles by which that idea may be realized, first claim our attention. The object of Education, it is often and perhaps rightly said, is not only to multiply to store the memory with facts, or the mind with knowledge, but to discipline the mental powers. From its etymology, the term Education means the leading out or development and consolidation of the vital powers. The intellect is educated when it comes instinct with good thoughts, and naturally clothes those thoughts in the most perfect forms of speech. It is educated in particular sciences when it is disciplined to a ripe familiarity with the nature and practical applications of the principles of such sciences, and when it is playing the great problems which they involve. The whole mind is educated, when all the mental powers are so harmoniously developed, that they act with the greatest force and perfection in whatever direction they are directed. The entire mind is educated, when the entire powers, mental and physical, are thus developed, beautified, and consolidated."

This is an enlargement of the idea of discipline; but still it does not quite answer the question. It comes nearer as we proceed, using exactly the word which conveys the significance to which no other word is equivalent. The whole idea of Education is embraced in the word—*development*. This is used in its broadest sense, implying the development of the true manhood, and raising all the means by which the highest condition of humanity can be realized. As the mind is composed of many faculties, sentiments, and propensities, development implies such an harmonious development of them as to be in accordance with the greatest good of mankind, individually and collectively. If one faculty is by birth, too strong for the realities of life, it is the business of Education to develop the other powers, that the defect may be corrected. If a propensity is too powerful for the individual's moral well-being, it is the business of Education to divert the weaker faculties into such activity as will divert the vitality of the system from an unbalanced propensity, and thus correct an unbalanced faculty. This can be done with every age and development by birth, so that all crimes and immoralities, and all the follies and stupidities of fashion-life may be banished from society. On this idea of Education our whole system, from the common school to the college, should be based.

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

For the National Era.

AN INVOCATION.

BY LYCIDAS.

Gently breathe thine spirit, O winds,

Who hold your tattered gales to the world's way.

Look them kindly; and, ye showers,

Fall down upon them; down the heaven playing,

Sunbeams scarcely dazzle them; and moon,

That shed a sadder moon in the still lake—

And ye bright stars, that hide ye at the noon,

Least spring your mirror, and least restless light—

Sing, shine; but give them utter joy. All mild,

All gentlest ministry of nature, wild

Wind, sweet, sweetest flower, sun-gathered rain, still

Sunbeams falling soft, moon, bright stars,

(Do not hear a joying from the choir

Faintly?) ye dear sisters love ye well.

O God, my sisters are thy children! Take,

O God, and lead them by thy holy hand!

Asleep, enshrine the spirit of sweet dreams

Under their heads; and at each day's awaking,

Frolickled, lead by their gentle guidance; so

Acquaint them lastly to this mortal fall!

Shall not drop off them as a garb of youth?

So Death, with enforced hand, shall gently touch

Their perfect spirit to eternal bliss!

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ington, D. C., will supply orders for these cabinets from any part of the country, or from other countries, by express or otherwise, as directed. They are made of the best materials, and are of curious antiquity, imported from England and elsewhere, in large request by visitors to our National Metropolis, from different States and countries.

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For the National Era.

THE SOUTHERN PLATFORM.

OR,

MANUAL OF SOUTHERN SENTIMENT ON THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY.

Being a Compilation from the Writings of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and others, whose names are consecrated in the affections of the Southern People—the Debates in the Federal and State Legislatures which framed and ratified the Constitution of the United States—those which occurred in the first Congress which sat during the Administration of General Washington—and extracts from the Debate in the Virginia Legislature in 1832, with various letters, political decisions, &c.

BY DANIEL R. GOODLOE, OF NORTH CAROLINA.

ELLIOTT'S DEBATES—VOL. III.

Debates in the South Carolina State Convention, called to ratify the Constitution—Continued.

By this settlement we have secured an unlimited importation of negroes for twenty years; it is declared that the importation of slaves is not stopped; it may be continued. We have a security that the General Government can never emancipate them, for no such authority is granted, and it is admitted on all hands that the General Government has no powers but those which are expressly conferred by the Constitution, and that all rights not expressed were reserved by the several States. We have obtained a right to recover our slaves in whatever part of America they may take refuge, which is a right we had not before. In short, Congress has induced their ancestors to agree to a treaty for the security of this species of property, it was in our power to make. We would have made better if we could; but on the whole I do not think them bad—Pages 355-357.

C. Pinckney. Those who are acquainted with the Southern States, and the habits, principles, and their pursuits, habits, and principles, will know that they are essentially different from those of the Middle and Southern States; that they retain all those opinions respecting religion and government which are the basis of the Southern States; and that they are, perhaps, more purely republican in habits and sentiment than any other part of the Union. The inhabitants of New York and the Eastern part of New Jersey, originally Dutch settlements, seem to have a more republican spirit than the rest of the country. This is a great part of New York may be considered as a Dutch settlement—the people in the interior country generally using that language, and the habits and having very few slaves. Their ancestors came from Holland and Delaware are nearly one-half inhabited by Quakers, whose passive principles upon questions of Government, and rigid opinions in private, render them extremely different from the people of the Southern States. Maryland was originally a Roman Catholic colony, and a great number of their inhabitants, some of them the most wealthy and cultivated, are still of this persuasion; it is unnecessary for me to state the striking difference of sentiment and feeling which exists between the Catholics of the East, the Calvinists and Quakers of the Middle States, and the Roman Catholics of Maryland; but striking as this is, it is not to be compared with the difference which exists between the inhabitants of the Southern States, and the rest of the country. I say Southern, I mean Maryland and the States to the southward of her; here we may truly observe that nature has drawn as strong marks of distinction in the habits and manners of the people, as she has in the climate and productions. The Southern States, with a kind of surprise, the simple manners of the East, and is too often induced to entertain undesired opinions of the apparent purity of the Quaker; while they, in their turn, seem to regard the Southern States as a land of dissipation and dissipation of their Southern friends, and reprobate as an unpardonable moral and political evil, the dominion they hold over a part of the human race. The inconveniences which too frequently attend these differences in habits and opinions, and the evils which result from the Union, are not a little increased by the variety of their State Governments; for, as I have already observed, the Constitution or laws under which a people live never fail to have a powerful effect upon their habits and manners, and to influence their political opinions.

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